

propose to bring the amendments before this august House? Secondly, the Minister has stated now that many district forums are working properly. But I would like to know as to how many districts are actually there throughout India, where there are no forums. If they have no forums, the question of their working well does not arise. I would like to know the number of districts which have no forums working.

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED: The three States of Sikkim, Meghalaya and Nagaland have not at all formed the district forums. In these three states, the forums have not been formed. As per my knowledge, out of the 450 districts in the country, 360 districts have got these districts forums.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: What about the legislation?

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED: Last week also I answered this question when Shri Advani put it. As I submitted earlier, the recommendations of the Working Group are under the examination of the Government and we are consulting the different Ministries which are involved in this. About 12 days back, the meeting of the Consumer Protection Council was held and they have made some recommendations. These recommendations are also under examination.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Government whether it is going to bring Public Distribution System within the jurisdiction of Consumer Protection Council. It has been reported in the newspapers that 49 per cent impurities has been allowed in the foodgrains which is distributed through the shops under Public Distribution System. I want to know whether the Consumer Protection Council can also investigate into the distribution of poor quality foodgrains to the poor and middle class people through the Public Distribution System? Will action be taken if Food Corporation of India and other officials are involved in it? What action will be taken against the

outlets of Public Distribution System which indulge in this malpractice?

[English]

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED: The Consumer Protection Act covers all goods and services. As regards the 49 per cent impurities, I may submit that perhaps the report is not correct. I think this has been misreported. For the kind information of the hon. Members, I am going to clarify the whole point while replying to the Demands for Grant of my Department.

[Translation]

SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per my knowledge the District Consumer Protection Forums are not working in all the districts of Maharashtra. I would like to know whether the Central Government will inform the Maharashtra Government about the districts where these forums have not been constituted. The Maharashtra Government has not provided facilities to the Forum members which are being given in other States and there is no action on delay in the matter. The forums are not working effectively. Similarly, the facilities also have not been provided to the State forum, will the Central Government write to the State Government in this regard? What steps are being taken to make that forum effective?

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED: There are 31 districts in Maharashtra and all the districts have the Consumer Protection Forums which are functioning. So far as the question of facilities is concerned, it is a State subject and State provides these facilities.

[English]

Development of Biotechnology

*593. **SHRI M.G. REDDY:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken for the development of biotechnology in India with special reference to the establishment of research institutions in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of pending applications for license from bio-tech companies for manufacturing high-tech pharmaceutical products; and

(c) the action taken thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGERET ALVA): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Government has taken specific measures for the development of biotechnology in the country firstly through the setting up of a National Biotechnology Board (NBTB) in 1982 and subsequently a separate Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in 1986. Generation of highly skilled manpower; creation of infrastructure facilities; basic and product based research and development; and biotechnology based industrial activities have been taken up. Safety measures needed for both R&D and application of products of biotechnology have been established.

In Andhra Pradesh, in addition to support to R&D projects, programmes have been started in the areas of : creation of modern Animal House Facility at the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad; programme support to the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB); Centre for Plant Molecular Biology at Osmania University; a DNA Finger Printing Facility at CCMB jointly being established by DBT, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); Post doctoral training and a bioinformatics Center operating at CCMB, Hyderabad; a programme of rice biotechnology at the Directorate of Rice Research, Hyderabad and animal diagnostic development at College of Veterinary Science, A.P. Agricultural University Campus, Tirupati. A semi-intensive prawn culture project at Nellore to establish

high productivity (8.50 tonnes/ha/year) through biotechnological interventions has been successful. A major programme for Oil palm Development in over 1000 ha. is in progress in the Krishna and Godavari Districts. In addition to the support from DBT, scientific agencies such as Indian Council of Medical Research, Indian Council of Agriculture Research, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and DST have established research institutions covering the fields of agriculture, nutrition and advanced work on molecular biology and have also supported R&D programmes.

(b) Nil.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many industries, both in public sector and private sector, have been and are being benefited in the state of Andhra Pradesh by the Research and Development in the field of biotechnology and what is the present status of commercialisation or anticipated dates of commercialisation for each of these products of these industries, both within the country and the prospect of exploiting it abroad and the details thereof.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, there are 78 industries which have benefited throughout the country through research and development in the field of biotechnology and out of these 9 industries are in Andhra Pradesh. Research and development in these areas have been made available to industries. In Andhra Pradesh 9 industries are now functioning with the technology that has been developed through the Department of Biotechnology.

SHRI M. G. REDDY: Sir, whether any biotechnology project in Andhra Pradesh is being financed by the World Bank, United Nations or by any foreign multinational corporations etc. and what are the steps taken by the Government to stop gene drain process of the West and whether a mechanism

exist in the Department of Biotechnology for quality control of pharmaceuticals products being manufactured by various Biotechnology companies; if so, the details thereof; if not, reasons thereof.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, there is no World Bank aided Projects at the moment. We have no money coming from them. About multinationals, I am not very sure but as far as I know, at the moment we do not have any collaboration. It is essentially our indigenous effort and development on which we are working.

The hon. Member has asked about the safety measures which are being taken. As far as this is concerned, I would like to say that the products used as drugs and pharmaceuticals go through very stringent examination for complete elimination of any bacteria, fungi, etc. I must also say that the Drugs Controller of India gives very careful safety instructions which are followed before these are commercially marketed for use.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Speaker, Sir, Andhra Pradesh is one of the very important States as far as agricultural production is concerned. As far as Biotechnology is concerned, there are certain projects which have been sanctioned. Particularly in Andhra Pradesh 6 projects have been sanctioned but there is no project which has come up to produce the bio-fertilizer. Similarly, there is no project to produce bio-gas, which is playing a very vital role in agriculture. Sir, Is there any project which is contemplated to be set up in Andhra Pradesh to produce the bio-fertilizer and also the bio-gas?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I can only say that at the moment I have a list of 9 industries which are operating with the technology provided by us. At the moment we do not have any bio-fertilizer project in Andhra

Pradesh. I would like to say that a number of biotechnology projects in agriculture are being operated and Andhra Pradesh has two or three of them. Bio-fertilizer projects would be introduced in phases in different parts of the country. But there is no proposal pending with us at the moment.

Welfare Schemes for Women

*594 **SHRIMI.V.V. S. MURTHY:** Will the Minister of PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the projects/schemes launched in the field of science and technology for welfare of women during 1989-90 and 1990-91;

(b) the achievements made and expenditure involved in each of the projects/schemes during the above period, state wise;

(c) the number of beneficiaries, State-wise; and

(d) the funds allocation proposed to be made therefor in 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS(SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) to (c),A statement giving details of the projects launched under the scheme 'Science and Technology for Women' during 1989-90 and 1990-91 is at Annexure-X.

(d) Allocation of funds proposed for 1992-93 is Rs. 100 lakhs.